

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the November 1, 2006 Office Action, claims 1, 4 and 13 were rejected.

Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ishibashi et al. (US 5,202,281). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 recites that a dopant is infused in at least a portion of the thin portion that is immediately adjacent to the at least one through hole. The Examiner states that the Ishibashi reference discloses this feature. The Applicants fail to understand how the Examiner can interpret the term "immediately adjacent" to include a configuration in which the dopant is infused in a portion of the thin portion that is on the opposite side of the thin portion from the through hole. In fact, the Examiner's overly broad interpretation of the term "immediately adjacent" renders this term essentially meaningless.

The Examiner also takes issue with the term "immediately adjacent" because it is a "relative location" that does not "specify the exact location of the first element with respect to the second element". The Applicants are quite baffled at this assertion. The Applicants are unaware of any statute or case law that requires a claim to recite the location of first element with respect to the second element with the degree of precision seemingly required by the Examiner. In fact, a search of the term "immediately adjacent" in the claims of issued patents indexed in the USPTO's online database indicates that, as of January 25, 2007, **14,145 issued US patents** contain the term "immediately adjacent" in at least one claim therein. Thus, the Applicants respectfully ask the Examiner for a citation to a statute or a case that would support his position that this term does not recite the requisite degree of precision with regard

to location. The Applicants also respectfully ask the Examiner whether it is his position that **14,145 patents** containing this term were erroneously issued by the USPTO.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102/103

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the Ishibashi reference. The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, on the ground that claim 4 is allowable in its current form because it is dependent upon claim 1, which as noted above, the applicants respectfully submit is now allowable over the cited prior art.

In view of the foregoing comments, the Applicants respectfully assert that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this communication (including extension of time fees) or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-2042.

Respectfully submitted,

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